Saskatchewan
Learning

Anti-Bullying Strategy

Saskatchewan Learning

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Policy on Anti-Bullying

- This government is committed to promoting caring and respectful schools that ensure healthy personal and social development for all. Such schools demonstrate, through preventative and effective intervention strategies, the belief that all children and youth have the right to an education free from bullying in all its forms.

- This government believes that bullying is a serious problem for the individuals involved, the school, families and the community. Bullying and victimization are not part of the healthy development of individuals, or the stability of any community. Bullying and victimization will not be tolerated in schools in any form.

- This government understands that bullying and victimization must be addressed on many levels. To be successful an anti-bullying intervention requires a *comprehensive strategy*. This strategy takes a systemic approach focusing not only on the bully and the victim, but on the school, students, parents and the larger community in which the bullying takes place. It acknowledges that solutions to bullying are not the sole responsibility of schools and require a *community-wide response* that engages all members of the community including youth, family, service providers and schools in shared responsibility.

Comprehensive Strategy to Address Bullying

Background

Saskatchewan Learning sets the legislative and policy direction for the education system through:

- The Education Act, 1995, which gives responsibility to boards of education for all aspects of the daily operations of schools. Any policies or procedures relating to student behaviour are the responsibility of the board of education; and,

- Saskatchewan Learning's *Caring and Respectful Schools: Toward School^{PLUS} Policy* that provides direction on:
  - strengthening a caring and respectful school environment;
  - developing and implementing school codes of conduct;
  - developing and implementing anti-bullying policy; and,
  - developing crisis response plans.

Recommended Actions

The following five key actions build upon the constructive policies and actions currently in place across the provincial education system. Taken together, they provide a comprehensive strategy for strengthening this solid foundation and engaging community and family members with schools to address the complex issue of bullying:

1. Ensure that all schools and school divisions in the province have an anti-bullying policy in place and the capacity to take action in partnership with family and community.
   - Regional Offices of Learning will work with individual school divisions to review policies to ensure that adequate provisions are in place to counter bullying including:
     a. strong school, community and division statement that bullying in schools will not be tolerated;
     b. a clear and concise definition of bullying;
     c. a statement that all children and youth have the right to a caring, respectful and safe school environment;
     d. a statement of responsibilities of all members of the school community including students who witness bullying, school staff, parents and community members;
     e. a school and division action plan outlining what will be done to deal with incidents of bullying; and,
     f. a plan ensuring the regular review and strengthening of anti-bullying policy and practices.

2. Commit one quarter of a million dollars over three years to work with communities and the Canadian Mental Health Association, Saskatchewan Division to strengthen anti-bullying and suicide prevention programming in Saskatchewan schools.

3. Establish Critical Incident Investigation Teams through the School^{PLUS} Service Areas.

4. Ask the federal Department of Justice and the Attorney General to review the provisions and remedies of the Criminal Code of Canada and the specific sections of the Youth Criminal Justice Act pertaining to bullying and incidents of aggression and assault in schools. The purpose is to provide clearer definitions of responsibility and more practical community-based tools, solutions and consequences for the police and community members to provide meaningful support to schools.

5. Integrate the Anti-Bullying Strategy as a critical component of the planning and monitoring process within the new Accountability Framework being developed by Saskatchewan Learning for restructured school divisions.